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ABSTRACT

The four position statements included in this occasional paper are the products of a conference involving the New York State Association of Teacher Educators and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education--New York State, on "Who Will Be the Teachers of the Future." "Entry Level Testing in New York State," prepared by John D. Van Buren, discusses the issues of entry level testing for teachers in New York State and the impact of required testing in the process of teaching as a profession. "Legislative Realities and Political Action: The Necessity for Collaborative Efforts," prepared by Barbara W. Gerber, reviews legislative realities and political action and the necessity for collaborative efforts on the part of education-related organizations. Helen Greene, in "Teacher Shortage: Implications for Teacher Educators," offers recommendations on the Associations' position in regard to teacher shortages in selected subject areas. In "New York State Certification Practices," Francis Silvernail raises the issue of certification practices which admit to the profession individuals who meet only minimum certification requirements. (JD)

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CONFEDERATED ORGANIZATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

AN OCCASIONAL PAPER

POSITION STATEMENTS

developed at the

Spring Conference, 1983

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NYS Association of Teacher Educators
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education-NYS

SP023187

The theme of our 1983 Spring COTE Conference held in Syracuse, which focused on "Who Will Be the Teachers of the Future?" has indeed become a front-burner issue. This year the Conference leaders, viz, F. Elizabeth Moody of AACTE-NYS and Russell Utz of NYSATE along with Gerald Mager of NYSATE came up with a very worthwhile idea. Five position statements were programmed on several relevant subjects which impinge upon tomorrow's teachers in New York State. These statements served as points of discussion at two of the sessions of the conference. The approach was straight-forward, with the position statements presented to a sub-group for the purpose of information, discussion, input and refinement.

The Executive Board of COTE was pleased with the format of this particular segment of the annual Conference. We extend our thanks to the authors of the position statements and also to the participants at the group meetings for their contributions to this project. Moreover, we are grateful to Gerald Mager for his efforts to disseminate these position statements in our COTE occasional papers.

Dr. Anthony N. Baratta
COTE Chairman

1983 Spring COTE Conference

COTE has a rich history and a well deserved reputation for meaningful spring conferences. The 1983 spring conference, focused on the theme "Who Will Be The Teachers of The Future?" was no exception. Arrangements for the conference began early in 1982 when the conference planning committee identified five people to research and present position statements appropriate for the conference theme. The five topics were: Teacher Shortage (Dr. Helen Greene), New York State Certification Practices (Dr. Francis Silvernail), Role of Computers in Instruction (Dr. David Sylves), Entry level Testing for New York State Licensure (Dr. John Van Buren), and Legislative Realities and Political Action (Dr. Barbara Gerber). These presenters were asked to submit their position statements to the COTE Board for approval prior to their distribution to conference participants on the first day of the conference.

During the conference, participants had the opportunity to attend two discussion sessions on the position statement topic of their choice and to participate in the following group discussion goals:

1. to listen and better understand the commentary of the researcher/presenter;

2. to discuss the written position statement (rationale and recommendations) and to suggest modifications; and

3. to arrive at a group consensus concerning the position statement.

The group discussions and recommendations for each position statement were summarized and presented during the COTE luncheon on Friday. Later, during the summer of 1983, the COTE Board approved the four revised position statements offered for inclusion in this publication.

We, as co-chairpersons of the 1983 conference, are pleased that this conference innovation (presentation and discussion of position statements) has resulted in this publication which we now present to our members.

Dr. Russell D. Utz
President, NYSATE

Dr. F. Elizabeth Moody
President, AACTE-NYS

Words, words, words. Words have the power to enlighten and inspire, or confuse and depress. Words can change people's minds or strengthen them in their present beliefs. Words are sometimes more useful than action and more permanent than might. Some would say that what we don't need is more words. Others would disagree: we don't listen and understand enough.

The COTE Position Statements on educational issues that confront New Yorkers are, at one level, just another collection of words. But, because they represent the discussions which occurred in April -- thoughtful exchanges of ideas among concerned educators who listened -- they are more than mere words. They are the beginning of understanding. They are a pledge to what lies ahead.

The four Position Statements included in this Occasional Paper are the products of the Spring COTE Conference, informed and revised by four of our members. Fran Silvernail, Barbara Gerber, Helen Greene, and John Van Buren merit our gratitude for their work. The Position Statements are presented here, largely as they were presented to the COTE Executive Board. Consider them not as the final words but as the spur to a further exchange.

Dr. Gerald M. Mager
Editor

ENTRY LEVEL TESTING IN NEW YORK STATE

Beginning September 2, 1984, the New York State Education Department will require all new teachers educated in and out-of-state, who wish to apply for certification, to submit satisfactory scores achieved on a national examination. This pending requirement will have significant impact on education and the preparation of educators in New York State.

The impact will result, for the first time, in the separation of successful and unsuccessful scorers all of whom will have prepared themselves to be teachers. Those individuals scoring below the cut-off point will not become certified to teach in the public schools in New York State. The Education Department is currently working with the Educational Testing Service to determine test content and curricula relevance. This work is being done through two panels: Content Relevance and Knowledge Estimation. Each panel has at least one hundred members composed of teachers and college and university professors. All geographic areas within the state are represented on each panel.

The examination requirement grew out of the recommendations in the report of the Commissioner's Task Force on Teacher Education and Certification which was submitted on April 1, 1977. The Task Force was established in response to requests by the Teacher Education Conference Board to make Teaching a profession in New York State.

The test that will be used after September 2, 1984 is the National Teacher's Examination published by ETS. COTE has taken various positions on issues arising from the teaching as a profession movement. The purpose of this paper is to generate a position on the requirement of future teachers to attain satisfactory scores on the NTE.

Entry level testing is by no means a new phenomena. Scores on such well known national tests as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing Program Battery (ACT) have been used by college admissions personnel as an aid in the selection of students for at least four decades. Likewise, admission to graduate and professional schools has in large part been determined by scores on such tests as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) and the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). Research has shown a significant correlation between scores on these tests and success in various graduate programs.

The armed forces have used test results to help determine military assignments since World War I. Fortunately, in practice, test scores have not been the exclusive measure used to predict success in school, the professions or in military service.

If we in teacher education are going to establish teaching as a profession, we will have to derive minimum competencies. Once these competencies are agreed upon, ways to measure their acquisition are in order. The general public has expressed great concern about the quality of teaching for some time. Licensure may serve to reassure the protec-

tion of their interests in their children's education. The National Teacher Examination has served as an objective measure of teacher competence for forty years.

While the NTE has had a long history, it has encountered many problems with structure and use. Published reviews have often been critical at most and cautious at least.

Inasmuch as the battery will be analyzed as to content and knowledge for application in New York State, one issue is how soon should scores determine the denial of certification. Since the release of the Task Force Report, critics have suggested the results should not be used until a trial period of three to five years has generated performance validations. Published reviews seem to support the need for validation. Performance measures of job success correlated to scores on NTE have for the most part been ratings of supervisory school personnel.

Since the proposed Professional Practice Board will not begin rating interns before the 1984-85 school year, use of test results should not begin before the first ratings are in. We may need more than one set of ratings before assurances are warranted.

The Knowledge Estimation Panel will conduct the basic work in determining the composite score on the Core Battery Test. Their recommendations will be used by TECAP to recommend to the Commissioner a cut-off score.

Whatever the outcome of the work of the review panels and the decisions of the Commissioner, programs in teacher education will be affected. We may find that the tests do not measure what we teach. In that event, should we standardize existing curricula or preparation programs to conform to what is measured on the NTE? The Test is national in scope, our needs are local and regional. Successful teaching in Florida may differ from successful teaching in New York. AACTE, as an organization, is just beginning to determine a knowledge base grounded in research on teaching. The outcome may be different from what is measured by the NTE.

Within New York there are a variety of institutions educating teachers. We may find that institutional differences are too disparate to reach a concensus as to the ideal teacher education program. Some institutions admit freshmen into teacher education. Others require majors in a discipline other than education, with subsequent professional courses in education to meet certification requirements. Questions can be raised about the content of general education as well as the content of professional preparation. To what extent do we know what the Liberal Arts Faculty is teaching and how concerned is the Commissioner with what they teach? So far, the debate is silent on this issue.

Finally, when can the public expect significant changes in the outcomes of education? As we move toward the year 2000 and the expectation that technical training will demand better high school graduates, we will need teachers who can positively affect the teaching-learning process. We should now ask ourselves how we can better do what we do

in teacher education.

Each of the above issues is related to the impact of required testing in the process of teaching as a profession.

Prepared by: John D. Van Buren
Hofstra University

LEGISLATIVE REALITIES AND POLITICAL ACTION: THE NECESSITY FOR COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

On both the state and national level, teacher educators have serious problems with which to contend. We have little or no organized and effective voice in Washington or Albany. It is not our purpose here to propose and debate action initiatives on the national scene, although it seems reasonable that successful state level coalitions could be extended to accomplish similar purposes at the national level.

Legislators at any level are elected to represent geographic, not ideological constituencies, and therefore cannot be assumed to have special knowledge about any particular issue. Constituencies which transcend geographic boundaries must then of necessity provide information to legislators and their staffs which will help them to initiate, support or modify appropriate legislation.

AACTE does have a lobbying effort at the federal level through the Governmental Relations Task Force. That conduit of information flows both ways because the organization also informs state and campus constituencies about issues of concern that are before legislative committees as well as informing legislators of pressing needs of concern for teacher education. It seems most reasonable that COTE, incorporating both AACTE-NYS and NYSATE, should serve a parallel function at the state level.

The need for information describing the ramifications of legislative initiatives is particularly high in these times of fiscal constraint because we cannot afford to spend money foolishly. Those of us who are, in a word, "on the front lines" have an important function we should serve. We should devise an avenue through which we can inform both Regents and legislators in Albany on issues, and through which we can inform ourselves about items before the Legislature or Board of Regents. Clearly we have allies and information sources in the State Education Department, but they are after all the secretariat to the Board of Regents, and we have no systematic access to legislators.

This organization is not funded such that we can unilaterally afford to set up and staff an office to accomplish that being proposed. We should instead move rapidly to form a coalition with other state level organizations whose objectives and memberships are similar enough to ours that common lobbying would be sensible. We should also commit ourselves to periodic individual lobbying efforts among our local representatives.

For purposes of discussion and debate, let us start with the proposal that follows: Be it resolved that COTE will join with as many education related organizations as possible to form a strong coalition which will help promote the goals we espouse, and that COTE will initiate this coalition. Some suggestions from discussants were as follows: NYSUT, NYEA, NY Personnel and Guidance, NY Library Association, NY Council of Chief School Officers, NY School Boards Association, NY Association of Vocational Educators; also the Vocational Education Administrators,

School Principals, School Psychologists, and so on.

Prepared by: Barbara W. Gerber
State University of
New York at Oswego

TEACHER SHORTAGE: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

1. COTE's position should be to raise public awareness through increased publicity about the teacher shortage. There should be a concentrated effort to have a public relations campaign which will emphasize society's needs for quality educators and society's obligations to provide the incentives to attract able people to education.

2. COTE's position should be to encourage college administrators to support and enhance the development of education for professionals in the field. If the decision is made that the mission of the college is to prepare educators, the necessary resources must be allocated.

3. COTE's position should be to encourage colleges and school districts to evaluate traditional and alternative programs for the retraining of math- and science-oriented teachers and other excessed professionals from industry for the fields of math and science.

   The state and federal governments should encourage candidates for these fields by forgiving student loans, and by allocating scholarships for training while demanding a specified time commitment to the field.

4. COTE should encourage schools, colleges and departments of education to prepare teachers for rural and urban schools with consideration for the provision of special courses and field experience.

5. COTE should support special provisions for <u>experienced teachers who are already certified</u> to qualify for certification in critical areas. At the same time, we oppose "emergency" licenses and "quick" certification measures.

Prepared by: Helen Greene
C.W. Post Center
Long Island University

New York State Certification Practices

Problem: Certification Practices of the State Education Department will certainly affect the kind of teachers we will have in the future. One particular practice which significantly affected who became the current classroom teachers was the practice of certifying, as qualified beginning teachers, those people who met only minimum certification requirements.

In spite of a decade of attempts to improve the quality of classroom teachers through changes in the requirements for approved programs and the development of examination requirements for beginning teachers, the percentage of people continuing to be certified as qualified classroom teachers on the basis of meeting only minimal standards has not decreased. The practice is questionable because during this same decade the supply of potential teachers far exceeded available teaching openings. The practice also undermines the teacher education profession because the profession is judged by the performance of all classroom teachers and not just those who have completed approved programs which we believe provide a better professional preparation than does the process of collecting a minimum number of teacher education credits.

Efforts of the colleges and universities to develop and maintain higher standards for new teachers by enforcing the requirements of approved programs are also undermined when students are able to by-pass the approved program recommendation or non-recommendation and still obtain a teaching certificate.

The current critical shortages of teachers in some teaching areas and the likely development of shortages in most teaching areas by the end of the current decade demands more than ever that we remove the temptation to solve the problem of teacher shortages by allowing even more people to be certified with minimal credentials. Instead of certifying poorly qualified candidates we need to attack the real causes of the shortages.

While there may be a sense of "mootness" in dealing with these practices because of the new licensure process, far too many people have been certified via the individual application route long past the date that such a practice was to cease. Concern about this problem has been on-going and we cannot simply wait to see if the licensing procedures will eliminate the practice. It is necessary to make certain that entry to the profession is based upon appropriate maximum requirements and that minimal qualification by-passes are not allowed.

Possible Actions and Working Guidelines For COTE: COTE is committed to developing and maintaining standards which lead to the achievement of excellence, while in pursuit of perfection, at all levels of education. COTE believes that the practice of certifying people to teach when they have met only minimum requirements inhibits the fullest realization of these goals. Therefore, we recommend the following actions:

1. That the minimal qualifications for teaching certificates be brought more in line with requirements of approved programs. This should

be achieved through administrative or legislative mandates.

An increase in minimum standards will increase the professional background and competence of people eligible for certificates. It will reduce the temptation for some to drop out of approved programs and to seek certification as individual applicants. Significantly increasing the minimal requirement will also discourage people from seeking entry into the teaching profession simply as a back-up career or as the easiest route to a second career. The opportunity for people with weak academic backgrounds or teaching attitudes to gain a teaching certificate by taking each of the minimum number of required courses at a different college or university will be reduced.

2. It is recommended that studies be developed and funded by the State Education Department which will provide data about the performance of classroom teachers correlated to various categories of pre-service professional preparation. Approved program preparation and minimal standard preparation should be among the categories as well as high and low scores on the examination to be used for licensing.

The State Education Department has or will have available the information about the professional preparation of the certified teachers. It is assumed that the State Education Department will have greater accessibility than do colleges and universities to the public schools where it will be necessary to obtain information about teaching performance. The collection of this data is essential so that we can lay to rest the on-going debate about performance of teachers with minimum qualifications versus approved program qualifications and to be able to make decisions and enforce standards related to possible pressure to change the certification requirements as teacher shortages develop during the next decade.

3. That the State Education Department discontinue the practice of issuing certificates to individual applicants and issue certificates only upon the completion of a New York State Department of Education approved program, or through the Inter-State Compact when applicants have completed their professional preparation outside of the State of New York. However, action on the recommendation should be deferred until the studies recommendation number two are completed and then, only if the data supports the conclusion put forth in the recommendation.

This action will prevent the continuing influx of people into the teaching profession certified as eligible for teaching positions and who are less qualified than persons completing approved programs. It will also reduce the so-called surplus of teacher applicants available for teaching positions.

Further, if such a practice is omitted and the standards of approved programs enforced, colleges and universities will have the ability to require students to complete approved programs in order to obtain certification. Students will be prevented from going from college to college and accumulating teacher education

credits without an assessment of their overall performance.

Prepared by: Fran Silvernail
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